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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [GG](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: TFGG1: GREEK FM ON GEORGIA CRISIS, OSCE MONITORS

REF: USNATO 293

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES DEBORAH MCCARTHY. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) Following the August 19 NATO Special Ministerial to address the on-going crisis in Georgia (reftel), Greek FM Dora Bakoyannis issued a statement, which contained both favorable and unfavorable elements in terms of U.S. policy and generally adhered to the positions of the "old Europe" NATO member-states. On the favorable side, she called for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgian territory, noted the "paramount importance" of states' territorial integrity, and pledged Greece's willingness to participate in the OSCE monitor mission. She also noted that the foreign ministers of the OSCE Troika (Spain, Finland, Greece) met following the NATO meeting to discuss sending OSCE monitors to Georgia. At the same time, she underscored Greece's support for convening a NATO-Russia Council meeting as a forum of negotiations. Greek PM Karamanlis has so far made no public statement on the Georgia crisis.

¶2. (C) A/Polcouns confirmed Greek intentions to participate in the OSCE monitor mission with Counsellor Elisabeth Fotiadou of the MFA A5 Directorate for CIS Countries. Fotiadou said Greece intended to send two monitors in the first tranche of 20 and would likely send more if/when the number of monitors increased to 100, as envisioned in OSCE plans. MFA Spokesman George Koumoutsakos also confirmed to A/PAO the Greek commitment to send two initial monitors -- the 10 percent permitted under OSCE rules -- and added that Greece was "ready to send ten for the 100-member mission." Koumoutsakos also said that Greece was considering sending an armored vehicle.

¶3. (U) BEGIN TEXT OF F BAKOYANNIS STATEMENT:

The only point on the agenda of today's extraordinary NATO Council in Brussels was the major crisis in Georgia. We had detailed discussions; all the member states took positions. There is wide concern about recent developments. Our own position was clear. We must move from the current ceasefire stage as soon as possible to a return to the status quo ante. This is the necessary first step for the initiation of a substantial dialogue aimed at finding a definitive solution through negotiations. Of particular importance within this framework is the implementation of what has been agreed upon, i.e., the implementation of the six points on which Russia and Georgia committed themselves and the withdrawal of Russian troops.

Here, I would like to add that the NATO-Russia dialogue is very important. Greece - along with many other countries - has been in favor of the continuation of this dialogue at all levels. I believe that we must make the most of every possibility presented by the institutionalized dialogue within the NATO-Russia Council in order to send the necessary message. The main thing is that this relationship is based on

some fundamental principles. Respect for the territorial integrity of states is of paramount importance. This principle along with non-violence are the firm principles of Greece's foreign policy.

Apart from the discussion within NATO, there was an extraordinary meeting of the OSCE Troika. As you know, Greece will assume the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009. We discussed the possibilities for OSCE action and agreed that, as a first stage, it is important for OSCE international observers to go to this region. There are good news in this first stage as the involved parties accepted that 20 observers be sent to the area. As you know, the OSCE members include Russia. 20 observers will go to the region and we hope that this will be the start for more international observers to go afterwards. They should reach 100. Greece as the country to assume the upcoming OSCE Chairmanship is ready to take part in this.

END TEXT OF FM BAKOYANNIS STATEMENT
MCCARTHY